

Carangas-
Chipaya

/115 cont. /

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[114] number at 500 individuals in 1894. As this archaeologist did not go to the village of Chipaya itself, his assertion is certainly very approximate and should not be invoked as a proof of the rapid extinction of this tribe. When one thinks of the barrenness of the environment, one is justified in asking oneself if this Uro group, exiled in the Carangas desert, was ever more numerous.

162
[115] The population of Chipaya is divided in the following fashion:
[116] Tuanta, with its subdivision, Warta-ayl'u, numbers 169 inhabitants (58 at Warta ayl'u and 111 at Tuanta properly so called), and
[117] Taxata 151. I doubt that in /116/ all the tribe is composed of more than 350 members. The numerical ratio between the sexes is 32 men to 26 women in Warta ayl'u and 86 men to 83 women in Tuanta. In Taxata the disproportion between the number of men and that of women (87 men to 63 women) is such that I can only explain it by possible errors in my census. The native who gave me the list of people in this "molety" did so reluctantly and very negligently. His reluctance is explainable by the fear that this operation inspired in all the Chipaya. They saw in it a measure which would put their former rights in danger or threaten them with some unusual tax (1).

651
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1. A short time before the expedition, a half-breed in the service of the government had gone to Chipaya to make a census of the population and to compel the Indians to procure identity cards, an ingenious process thought up by Bolivia to extort money from the wretched native population. The Chipaya took the business very badly, and the half-breed, threatened with death, barely had time to escape. The Indians related the incident to me, still laughing uproariously at the terror

[609]

Carangas-
Chipaya

/116 cont./

651
659

that they inspired in this functionary.
The hero of this adventure even had
the ridiculous idea of offering to
accompany me to Chipaya.

163

The Čipaya are not very prolific. Households with more than two children are rare. I know of only one with five children, two with four, and five with three. Infant mortality is very high, as in all Indian tribes. Couples without children are fairly numerous, and the Čipaya often remedy this situation, which they consider a misfortune, by the adoption of an orphan. For a pastoral people like the Čipaya, children represent a capital asset and contribute to relieving their parents of a part of the work that has to be done by watching over the flocks. Hence their despair if their union remains sterile.

162

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One must include in the number of temporary inhabitants of Chipaya village the people of Salinas who come to buy cheese. These individuals, for the most part repugnant half-breeds or assimilated Indians, sometimes remain there for a rather long period. Some Aymara from Sabaya or Icara seem to be permanently established in the village. These strangers almost always have shops and sell to the Čipaya coca, alcohol, and some small objects of prime necessity.

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The language. The Čipaya are all bilingual. Among themselves they still employ a Uro /Uru/ dialect, and with strangers, Aymara. This latter language is tending more and more to supplant Uro and has already eliminated a considerable number of the most common words. This infiltration of Aymara is already so advanced that there are no children over ten who do not speak it, and all the women, although the majority have /117/ never left their village, express themselves fluently in this language. The Čipaya have also undergone a Quichua /Quechua/ influence, as the Quichua elements in their vocabulary show. Spanish has also exercised great power over their primitive tongue. Its effect has